



City of Maple Valley

Economic Environmental Scan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
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Maple Valley City Council Meeting

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Objectives for Strategic Implementation - 2012

Throughout the four economic roundtable discussions, six objectives will be addressed and met in the research:

- 1. What are the priorities for strategic implementation?**
- 2. Where should the implementation occur within the City of Maple Valley?**
- 3. Who should be part of the strategic implementation team?**
- 4. How will the implementation be done? What are the resources (financial, leadership, design, and development) that will support the strategic implementation?**
- 5. When should the strategic implementation occur?**
- 6. What are the best alternatives to implementation strategies developed in the Economic Development Council?**

Environmental Scan 2011 Economic Development Council

Workforce Development

Workforce Development – Strengths

1. Over 22% of the Maple Valley workforce holds jobs at companies such as Microsoft, Expedia, and Boeing – most important, these are growing, financially strong firms.
2. The Tahoma School District is one of the most important attributes of the City of Maple Valley to both parents and the quality of life of residents. The school system can help assist in the growing demand for a professional technical workforce.
3. Higher incomes in Maple Valley reflect the high proportion of residents who have completed a higher level of education and are pursuing professional management and technical careers.
4. There is a high demand for good paying local jobs within the City of Maple Valley from its current residents.
5. Residents of Maple Valley support green and technical-oriented advanced manufacturing and believe it is a priority to establish businesses that will attract such a workforce in the city.
6. The Tahoma School District is actively pursuing the new workforce training opportunities in response to the new Boeing investment of the 737 Max production line and its related supply chain companies.

Workforce Development – Challenges

1. Because of the insufficient jobs available in the City of Maple Valley, many residents are forced to leave the community for work (~60% of the adult working population living within the City of Maple Valley).
2. The cost of transportation both in terms of time and expenses is high for residents, as an estimated 79% of the Maple Valley workforce commutes 31 miles each day.
3. The limited public transportation in Maple Valley is largely due to the funding constraints facing King County Metro.
4. Residents support the fact that the City of Maple Valley needs to focus on the economic development of the community.
5. The traffic constraints are exacerbated by commuters living outside the city who are passing through Maple Valley to other employment and entertainment/retail locations.
6. There is a lack of convergence between business and economic activity with the City of Maple Valley. (I would like this statement explained further to me.)

Basic and Advanced Infrastructure

Basic and Advanced Infrastructure - Strengths

1. The City of Maple Valley's location on Highway 18 is particularly attractive for economic development within the city. The SR 18/SR 169 interchange is located half-way between I-5 and I-90.
2. The waste water, water, gas and electric utilities can meet the demands of future growth within the City of Maple Valley.
3. The quality of public safety services provided the Maple Valley Police Department and the Maple Valley Fire and Life Safety District provides a strong sense of safety in the City of Maple Valley.
4. Maple Valley is now served by fiber optic networks provided by Century Link and Integra Telecom. Comcast also provides its business package of telecom services within the City.
5. Green and technical-oriented, advanced manufacturing can be supported by and in the community.
6. Locally, real estate, affordability, higher household income, and good housing are strengths of the City of Maple Valley.
7. Roads, sidewalks, and parks in the City of Maple Valley have been well maintained.
8. The Greater Maple Valley Community Center received a 3-year WSDOT grant to create and provide paratransit services for seniors within the community.

Basic and Advanced Infrastructure - Challenges

1. The demand for more recreational facilities to meet the growing population (in number of families, too) needs to be addressed. The City Council created a Parks & Recreation Commission in 2011 to lead the community discussions of meeting this demand.
2. Over the last year, the economic development committee has provided an in depth assessment of the economic opportunities. In 2012, the committee will focus on developing and implementing strategies to the City Council.
3. Currently, there is a high unmet public transportation need in Maple Valley and in southeast King County. Therefore, the costs of transportation to work centers and retail/entertainment venues will continue to increase.
4. Traffic is a challenging issue that has formed in Maple Valley. The congestion is caused by inter-regional commutes through the City of Maple Valley. Furthermore, the entire South King County region as a whole has problems with congestion. Without an adequate public transportation alternative, traffic congestion will continue to exist for years to come.

Access to Capital and Technology

Access to Capital – Strengths

1. Currently, access to capital is available through local financial institutions to support businesses. Local representatives from both Key Bank and Columbia Bank in Maple Valley have mentioned various new loan programs offered by them to qualified applicants. Bank of America and Chase Bank, also with local branches, have the funding for new loan origination.
2. Lines of credit are the best performing product for Columbia Bank. Every customer has renewed their line of credit either in either the same amount or at a higher amount this past year.
3. Financing opportunities from foreign investment avenues may play a major role in regional economic development efforts now and in the future.
4. The Small Business Administration Center, located at Green River Community College in nearby Auburn, offers training, counseling and financing options to small business owners in the area.
5. The City of Maple Valley has a large bonding capacity, due to the small amount of debt outstanding for the city. For future funding, the city will be considering the use of councilmanic bonds or voter approved bonds to fund future public projects.

Access to Capital - Challenges

1. The recent banking crisis has led to stricter eligibility requirements for individuals or organizations looking for loans. For example the debt service coverage ratios for Columbia Bank have risen to 1.35 from 1.15 over the past year. Additionally, the collateral requirements for banks have tightened significantly. Banks are not only receiving fewer inquiries for business loans, but the quality of the applicants has deteriorated. Borrowers are not meeting the requirements set up by the banks. All of this leads to the idea that access to capital has lessened.
2. The financial problems among banks are not just a national concern, but also a concern at the local level, especially among small and emerging businesses.

Access to Technology - Strengths

1. Puget Sound Energy has recently invested in a new sub-station in Maple Valley that will improve the quality of electricity in the area, but also improve its service delivery to customers by improving redundancy within the local grid system.
2. There is currently a large capacity of fiber optics available in Maple Valley. Access to fiber optic networks is provided by Century Link and Integra Telecom in Maple

Valley. Comcast provides its business telecom package in the Maple Valley area. Because of this, a business or an office in Maple Valley can produce the same internet and cable speed as the Microsoft headquarters in Redmond.

Access to Technology - Challenges

1. Grants through organizations have depleted over the last few years as a source for future funding. (I would like to have this statement clarified for me, please.)

Social Infrastructure for a High Quality of Life

Social Infrastructure for a High Quality of Life – Strengths

1. The strong sense of place in the community is highly valued by residents and contributes to their high quality of life.
2. The Tahoma School District is only of the highest ranking school districts in the State of Washington for the quality of education it provides the children of the Maple Valley area. The School District also has a strong sports program for its students, as well as the prestigious “We the People” debate club.
3. Maple Valley has a strong supply of future housing at all price ranges.
4. Maple Valley has been able to maintain the city streets, parks, and other common areas. This contributes to a positive image of Maple Valley, as well as managing well a key infrastructure asset of the City.
5. Volunteerism is critical in Maple Valley. There are 232 members in the Chamber, and serve as a strong backbone for the community. The Boys Scouts, Girls Scouts and Camp Fire are very active in the community. Because of these organizations, at least six Eagle Scout projects are completed in the area. Also, the strong local Rotary Club raises about \$100,000 each year for the community to support various community initiatives.
6. The Lake Wilderness Arboretum has the largest collection of Western azaleas and fuchsias on the West Coast. It is also home to a growing collection of irises through the its partnership with the Washington Iris Society. It recently partnered with local Indian tribes to create a unique garden focusing on plants used in everyday life by the local Indian tribes.
7. The churches in the area have contributed to the community by creating transitional housing for critical social service programs (Vine Maple Place).
8. The Greater Maple Valley Community Center provides activities for the senior population throughout the year. It has recently received a WSDOT grant to create and operate the Southeast Regional Shuttle, a door-to-door transportation service to transportation-dependent citizens living within its service area.
9. Multiple art events, cultural events, and family and community events currently take place in Maple Valley through the Maple Valley Arts Council, the Maple Valley Youth Symphony, the Tahoma School District and the Maple Valley Parks Department. The community is well connected to one other.
10. The Robotics Club of Tahoma High School continues to expand, and could provide a potential opportunity for the students to present findings to CAMPS (Center for Advanced Manufacturing Puget Sound).
11. The library, historically a focal point of the community, is becoming better utilized by citizens looking for jobs and by students needing tutoring.

12. Community events are in abundance in Maple Valley. The Chamber-sponsored fishing derby, Maple Valley Days, the annual 4th of July celebration, the Maple Valley Farmer's Market, the City's Music and Movie in the Park series and annual Holiday Celebration are enjoyed by the citizens each year.
13. Lake Wilderness Park and the Cedar River Trail, the Lake Wilderness Trail and the Pipeline Trail provide fun, fitness and enjoyment for citizens throughout the year.
14. Lake Wilderness Lodge is a wonderful venue for weddings, meetings and other gatherings.
15. The City-owned Lake Wilderness Golf Course and the Elk Run Golf Course provide opportunities for golfers of all levels. Druids Glen Country Club, just 3-4 miles outside of the City, provides a more challenging venue for the experienced golfer.
16. Miles and miles of trails within 10 miles of Maple Valley connect the urban environment to the rural amenities offered by the Cascade foothills. Many state parks are located within a short drive from Maple Valley.
17. Maple Valley is located an hour of the Mt. Rainier National Park and Snoqualmie Pass and is located within a 30 minute drive to the urban amenities that the Seattle-Tacoma metro area have to offer. The Pacific Ocean is a short two-hour drive away. Portland, Oregon and Vancouver/Victoria, British Columbia are only about 3 hours from Maple Valley.

Social Infrastructure for a High Quality of Life – Challenges

1. Citizens of Maple Valley do not feel that the local economy is stable.
2. More students in the school district are applying for "free lunches," an indication that more families are facing financial issues.
3. While primary healthcare services are adequately provided within the City, citizens must currently travel out of the City to receive specialty health care located at or near area hospitals (Auburn, Federal Way, Renton, Bellevue, Highline or Issaquah).
4. The development of a conference center is not an attraction that is going to bring in jobs given the current Maple Valley infrastructure. (Please clarify this statement.)
5. Signage is a persistent issue for the city and standards need to be revisited in order to support existing and future local businesses. Standards need to address the use of current practices and technology available and in use in other communities.
6. Maple Valley has three large areas of land that need to be assessed for potential businesses—Hayes/Brandt properties at the northside, Legacy Site/264th Street corridor area near Four Corners and the County-owned Donut Hole. These areas can provide resources for new businesses to develop, but Maple Valley must make these areas attractive to businesses with appropriate zoning codes, with a timely and thorough permitting process, with the willingness of owners open to development and a current community-based vision of these properties).